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Security Council

Sixty-ninth year

Provisional

7170th meeting

Thursday, 8 May 2014, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Oh Joon	(Republic of Korea)
Members:	Argentina	Mrs. Perceval
	Australia	Mr. Quinlan
	Chad	Mr. Cherif
	Chile	Mr. Lanos
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	France	Mr. Bertoux
	Jordan	Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Husein
	Lithuania	Ms. Murmokaite
	Luxembourg	Ms. Lucas
	Nigeria	Mrs. Ogwu
	Russian Federation	Mr. Pankin
	Rwanda	Mr. Gasana
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Wilson
	United States of America	Ms. Power

Agenda

Maintenance of international peace and security

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Maintenance of international peace and security

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Senegal to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2014/318, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Argentina, Australia, Chad, Chile, France, Jordan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Nigeria, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Rwanda, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Argentina, Australia, Chad, Chile, China, France, Jordan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Nigeria, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Rwanda, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2154 (2014).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements after the voting.

Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein (Jordan): I would like to begin by addressing these words to the family of the late Captain Mbaye Diagne.

For 20 years, they have grieved the loss of man who once served the United Nations — indeed humankind — with the greatest distinction as a military observer in the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda. That he was never to return alive to his beloved family or to the country he served so well must have brought immense pain, and that no official from the United Nations Headquarters here in New York ever called on his family can only be described as shameful. While I can only speak for my own delegation, I am absolutely sure that everyone here will join me when I say that we are sorry, profoundly sorry, for the way they have been treated by us here at the United Nations.

We now recognize, what they have always known, Mbaye was the finest example of what we humans, our human family, can produce, the very best of what we are and what we have, and of whom his family and the people of Senegal must always be very proud. In this context, I am very pleased to see our colleague the Permanent Representative of Senegal, Ambassador Abdou Salam Diallo, with us here this morning.

By adopting resolution 2154 (2014), the Security Council not only honours the memory of Captain Mbaye Diagne, but in creating a medal in his name for exceptional courage, we will for the first time in United Nations history recognize publicly those who perform amazing feats in the face of extreme danger on behalf of the United Nations and humankind. Most especially, we hope that the medal will inspire those United Nations and associated personnel who toil in dangerous situations to continue serving the United Nations bravely. And for those few who demonstrate the most breathtaking acts of human courage, this new and rare medal in the name of Captain Mbaye Diagne, together with the universal recognition that will come with it, will represent humankind's ultimate acknowledgment of their selfless devotion to the well-being of others.

Finally, Mr. President, I would like to thank you and all the members of the Security Council for the enthusiastic commitment and cooperation all of you have shown in drafting this resolution, in sponsoring it, and in seeing it adopted this morning by consensus.

Mr. Gasana (Rwanda): On 16 April 2014, the Security Council adopted resolution 2150 (2014) on the occasion of the twentieth commemoration of the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. The resolution also commemorates Hutus and others who were killed because they opposed the genocide. Obviously, Captain Mbaye Diagne could be categorized among those. But for us Rwandans, Captain Diagne is more than that. He is a hero. He was a son of Africa, born in the great nation of Senegal, which is represented here by His Excellency Mr. Abdou Salam Diallo, Permanent Representative to the United Nations, who I salute.

Captain Diagne, as a peacekeeper in the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR), understood better than anyone else what his mission was. In the face of evil, he refused to be a bystander. He chose to become an upstander. He acted as a

peacekeeper. He acted as a solider. He acted as a human to save lives, even against the UNAMIR mandate, against the rule of engagement and against instructions from New York. With no guns, no weapons, armed only with courage and a sense of responsibility, Captain Diagne decided to conduct several missions, passing through dozens of checkpoints held by armed militias to save hundreds, perhaps thousands of Rwandans during the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi.

For his courage and bravery, Captain Mbaye Diagne was, on 4 July 2010, posthumously awarded the Umurinzi medal by the Government of Rwanda, together with 11 other exceptional men who contributed to the campaign against the genocide in Rwanda. I am convinced that his wife Yacine, his daughter Coumba and his son Cheikh will always be proud of him, just as we Rwandans and we nations of the world will always be proud of his service to humanity.

It is in this context that we particularly thank His Royal Highness Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein and the Jordanian mission for submitting resolution 2154 (2014), which was adopted unanimously today and created the Captain Mbaye Diagne Medal for Exceptional Courage, to be awarded to those military, police, civilian United Nations personnel and associated personnel who, in the future, will demonstrate similar courage while fulfilling the mandate of their missions or their functions in the service of humanity.

We believe that this medal is not only a recognition of the courage of the man, but also a reminder of what a soldier and a peacekeeper should be — a woman or a man dedicated to promoting peace, to saving lives against all odds and to obeying the most important rule, the protection of the vulnerable. Let us hope that this medal will encourage the Security Council, the Secretariat and peacekeepers to better promote the protection of civilians and the responsibility to protect.

While celebrating the exceptional courage of Captain Mbaye Diagne, we also remember the heroic acts of ordinary Rwandans, many of whom paid the ultimate sacrifice to protect the Tutsi and oppose the genocide, which took the lives of more than one million Rwandans in 100 days. We also pay tribute to other blue helmets who were killed during the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, including the 10 Belgian peacekeepers who were killed while protecting the former Prime Minister, the late Agathe Uwilingiyimana. To their families, we offer prayers and solace. Rwandans will always be grateful.

To conclude, I sincerely hope that the Captain Mbaye Diagne Medal for Exceptional Courage will serve as an opportunity for soul-searching on the part of the United Nations, which should always ensure that humanity is collectively preserved by the community of nations and guided by moral rules and principles rather than only protected by the courage — I am so sorry, I must pause, this is emotional for me — of exceptional individuals like Captain Mbaye Diagne, whose life we are celebrating today.

The President: I am sure that all of us sympathize with the emotions expressed by the representative of Rwanda.

I now give the floor to the representative of Senegal.

Mr. Diallo (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): I would first like to bow to tradition in warmly congratulating you, Sir, on your country's accession to the presidency of the Security Council and to assure you of my delegation's full cooperation.

I am honoured to take part in this meeting of the Council, which is convened to pay tribute to a worthy son of the United Nations — Captain Mbaye Diagne, a peacekeeper and fallen hero on the field of honour in Rwanda, with the ideals of the United Nations as his bible. I would also like to heartily thank His Highness Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein, Permanent Representative of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, who had the happy notion of giving the achievements of this young officer unprecedented recognition, once again underscoring his beloved country's attachment to the cause of peace and justice around the world.

I am pleased to be able to extend my gratitude to all the members of the Council that sponsored today's resolution 2154 (2014) in a sign of the unanimous drive supporting the resolve of the international community, through Mbaye Diagne, to re-establish the protection of civilians at the centre of its priority concerns. The resolution, which dedicates an eponymous medal to his exceptional courage, is irrefutable proof of the Security Council's commitment to recognizing the many sacrifices made by thousands of Blue Helmets in theatres of operations.

Born on 18 March 1958, Captain Mbaye Diagne, who was married with two children, began his service in the Senegalese army on 15 January 1983, rising to the rank of captain on 1 April 1991. His last assignment within the Senegalese armed forces was as Unit Commander of the 6th Infantry Battalion. In saving

the lives of hundreds of people, as his conscience dictated, Captain Diagne embodied the motto of the National School for Active Officers, where he was trained — "Intelligence, honour, bravery" — the virtues that underpin the Senegalese army. In Senegal, he has thus been posthumously raised to the rank of Chevalier of the National Order of the Lion and awarded the Military Cross with silver star, as well as being chosen as godfather to the 13th class of the National School of Active Officers, who graduated in 1995. We will keep the memory of this brave officer in our hearts forever, in piety and gratitude.

This is also the time to salute the many honours that the late Captain Diagne has received. From Dakar to Kigali, from Washington, D.C., to Padua, worthy men, women and institutions have paid tribute to him. In that regard, he will be receiving the Umurinzi award, which recognizes heroes of the Rwandan genocide, from President Paul Kagame, whom I would like to thank, and through him the friendly and fraternal people of Rwanda for the honourable treatment they have always shown to the family of Mbaye Diagne. Just now I was gripped by the emotion shared by my friend and brother the Permanent Representative of Rwanda, Ambassador Eugène-Richard Gasana. Captain Diagne was also honoured by, among others, Mrs. Hillary Clinton on behalf of the Department of State of the United States, as well as by the Garden of the Righteous of the World of Padua for distinguishing himself with bravery for such a noble cause.

World peace requires rejection and enmity to yield forever to acceptance and dialogue with one another. It implies that the commitment of United Nations forces be permanently rooted in the universal values that we have chosen and inscribed in letters of gold in the Charter of the United Nations. That is the essence of the virtue that is so eloquently expressed in today's resolution.

I am happy to conclude by taking this opportunity to reaffirm my country's commitment, and in particular the commitment of its armed forces, to the ideals that unite the community of nations gathered in within this Headquarters of world peace. To Captain Mbaye Diagne, to whom I express the gratitude of the Senegalese nation, I say, rest in peace in the land of the heroes of the United Nations, which will forever enshrine you in posterity.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 10.25 a.m.